

Practical guidance on developing Sport and Physical Activity Projects under the Cohesion Policy Funds



SHARE initiative

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List of abbreviations

- **CF** – Cohesion Fund
- **CINEA** - European Climate, Infrastructure and Environment Executive Agency
- **EACEA** - European Education and Culture Executive Agency
- **ERDF** - European Agricultural Fund for Rural Development
- **EMMF** - European Maritime and Fisheries Fund
- **ERDF** – European Regional Development Fund
- **ESF** – European Social Fund
- **KPIs** – Key Performance Indicators
- **MFF**- Multiannual Financial Framework
- **MS** – Member States
- **OP** – Operational Programmes
- **PA**: Partnership Agreements.
- **PO**: Policy Objectives.
- **PPAs**: Pilot Projects and Preparatory Actions.
- **REA** - European Research Executive Agency
- **S3** – Smart Specialisation Strategies

1. Introduction

This guide has been developed as part of the [SHARE Initiative](#). Launched by the European Commission in 2018, SHARE is a platform that gathers the sport movement, cities, regions, universities and businesses related to sport to promote the role of sport and physical activity in regional and local development. It wants to ensure that sport and physical activity are adequately taken into account for EU, national regional and local policy-makers **in particular in relation to [Cohesion Policy Funds 2021-2027](#)**, designed to encourage the regional and local development in EU Member States.

This guide has been developed to help sports organisations and public authorities at local and regional level to access [Cohesion policy funds](#) for projects linked to sport and physical activity.

Cohesion Policy Funds contribute to strengthening economic, social and territorial cohesion in the European Union and correct imbalances between countries and regions. They deliver on the Union's political priorities, especially the green and digital transition. Their main characteristic, unlike other sources of European funding commonly used by the sports sector such as Erasmus +, is that they are **shared management funds**. This means that they are **managed directly by the different Member States**, either at national or regional level, depending on the country.

At the beginning of each seven-year programming period, the Commission and Member States agree on key priorities (the so-called [Partnership Agreements, PA¹](#)), which are set out in national or regional programmes (the so-called [Operational Programmes, OP²](#)). Once the programmes are agreed, **Member States are responsible for implementing the planned actions**. The **management of the funds is carried out by the so-called [Managing Authorities, MA](#)**. The complete list of managing authorities published by DG REGIO can be found [here³](#). They provide information on the programme, publish calls for proposals, select projects and monitor implementation. The European Commission monitors implementation, reimburses expenditure and is ultimately accountable for the budget.

The [policy objectivesPolicy Objectives \(PO\)](#) to be borne in mind at the time of preparing project applications are:

- PO1: a **Smarter Europe**, through innovation, digitisation, economic transformation and support to small and medium-sized businesses.
- PO2: a **Greener, carbon free Europe**, implementing the Paris Agreement and investing in energy transition, renewables and the fight against climate change.
- PO3: a **more Connected Europe**, with strategic transport and digital networks.
- PO4: a **more Social Europe**, delivering on the European Pillar of Social Rights and supporting quality employment, education, skills, social inclusion and equal access to healthcare.
- PO5: a **Europe closer to citizens**, by supporting locally led development strategies and sustainable urban development across the EU.

¹ https://commission.europa.eu/publications/partnership-agreements-eu-funds-2021-2027_en

² https://ec.europa.eu/regional_policy/in-your-country/programmes_en

³ https://ec.europa.eu/regional_policy/in-your-country/managing-authorities_en

This is especially important since, as it will be elaborated in subsequent sections, sport and physical activity are not explicitly listed as core objectives in most of the Operational Programmes. However, it is important to bear in mind that, as shown in the following SHARE infographics, they have the potential to contribute to each of the identified policy objectives.



*Infographic on the manifold contribution of sport to regional development (KEA 2018-2021)
© image credits: KEA European Affairs*

Shared management works under the **partnership principle**, where partners and stakeholders should be associated at all stages from programming to implementation, monitoring and evaluation. This principle is key for ensuring that spending is as effective and efficient as possible.

Finally, please note that **these funds can be combined with other funding sources**. For instance, a regional development and social inclusion can combine ERDF and ESF+ funds while a research and innovation

project can receive funding by both ERDF and Horizon Europe. However, **co-funding under ERDF is often necessary** (i.e. adding private funding to the amount granted) **and double funding** (cover the same cost twice) **is not allowed**.

Please note that this guide does not provide detailed instructions on how to write a project application. However, it does offer examples of previously selected projects, helpful tips on the application process, and essential information on the **funding programmes available for the sport sector**, with a **focus on the Cohesion Policy Funds**. **This guide only covers the MFF 2021-2027.**

2. Target audience of the guide.

This guide is designed mainly for sport stakeholders (individuals, sport clubs, organisations, federations and businesses as well as SMEs and higher education institutions working in the field of sport) who are eligible for the Cohesion Policy Funds. However, it could also be used by public authorities at national, regional or local level who wish to discover how sports projects financed with cohesion funds can contribute to regional development.

3. Types of Cohesion Policy Funds from which the sport sector can benefit

3.1 [European Regional Development Fund \(ERDF\)](#)⁴

The ERDF is designed to promote economic and social development in EU regions, with a focus on improving infrastructure and creating jobs. In this sense, it provides funding for infrastructure projects related to sports, such as the construction or renovation of sports facilities and stadiums; research and innovation projects related to sport and sustainable sport tourism among other projects.

Example of sport projects that can be funded:

- **Environment protection and resource efficiency (I.e.: Sustainable tourism project: [Cycling actions for the promotion of sustainable tourism in Cataluña, Spain](#).** The project promotes the use of bicycles as a sustainable mode of transport, both for everyday mobility and for leisure, sport and tourism.
- **Low-carbon economy – [Installation of a nearly zero-energy sport facility as a model project \(Hungary\)](#)**
The aim of the development is to develop a nearly zero-energy sports facility as a model project in Kiszvárd. The project is part of an integrated development, which, in addition to infrastructure elements, places great emphasis on human and economic sustainability.
- **Competitiveness of SMEs (I.e.: SME business development, support to entrepreneurship and incubation (including support to spin offs and spin outs): [SpeedUp SeedStone – a fund supporting innovative technological projects aimed at the markets of Financial Technologies, Sport, Mediatech and MarTech in Poland](#).** The SpeedUp SeedStone project assumes the creation of a specialised capital fund, whose mission is to activate, identify and validate innovative projects originating from the Polish

⁴ https://ec.europa.eu/regional_policy/funding/erdf_en

academic community and launch globally competitive companies on their foundation. A common element of the technological innovations sought will be the possibility of their applications in the areas of financial technologies, cybersecurity, sport (including e-sport) and the Mediatech and MarTech markets.

3.2 [European Social Fund \(ESF+\)](#)⁵

The ESF+ is designed to promote social inclusion and reduce inequality in the EU. It provides funding for social and educational programs related to sports, such as initiatives to encourage young people to participate in sports, to promote the development of soft skills through sport and to promote active and healthy lifestyles.

Example of sport projects that can be funded:

- **Educational and vocational training.** [Training of professionals in sport 2018-2022 in Slovenia](#). The objective is for employees operating within the realm of sport to gain the supplementary competencies and skills that are currently in high demand within the job market.
- **Social inclusion: 1)** [Providing development opportunities for young people in Estonia](#). Participants were offered opportunities to:(a) engage in sport in a free atmosphere and develop related skills; B) gain gaming and competition experience; C) Develop social skills for life and strengthen their protective factors. 2) [Take part — foster social inclusion through sport in Croatia](#). Through sport the project developed and improved the social service in the area of Benkovac City and encouraged the social inclusion of the target groups: 70 people — children and young people up to 29 years old (10 of them with disabilities) and 50 people over 54 years old.
- **Sustainable and quality employment: 1)** [Water Lily Sport Club – suburban camps and children’s club in Czechia](#) The project offered children a space for spending free time until a working parent could pick them up. Its aim was to provide working parents with the possibility of returning to work, taking up employment or changing their jobs according to their qualifications and practice, insofar as they are not possible because of the need to take care of the child. 2) [Lobbies 2, Sweeden](#). By offering sport movement’s leadership programs and practice at a sports club/school/nursery school, the project provided young job-seekers, female and male, increased self-esteem, greater belief in their own capacity and strengthened the individual’s ability to work. The recruitment of participants was be done in collaboration with employment offices in the districts.
- **Social innovation:** Sport inclusion. [Sport Ireland](#) and the local sport partnerships network Local Sport Partnerships became beneficiaries of the ESF+ for the first time in Ireland. Following a SHARE CBA hosted by Sport Ireland, Ireland’s ESF + programme included Sport Ireland’s Sport Inclusion programme under the social innovation strand. The total investment is €11M is to be invested by Sport Ireland by 2027, with 95% match funding from EU under the innovation pillar, which requires just €500,000 from the Irish Exchequer.

⁵ <https://ec.europa.eu/european-social-fund-plus/en>

3.3 Interreg Europe⁶

The [Interreg programme](#), co-funded by the European Union, supports **cross-border cooperation and regional development** in Europe. It is designed to promote economic, social, and territorial cohesion across the EU by funding projects that involve cooperation between regions from different countries. Although Interreg is not specifically a sports funding programme, it does provide funding for projects related to sports and physical activity. The type of projects that can be funded by the Interreg Europe programme include but are not limited to, the promotion of cross-border cooperation in the development of sports infrastructure, or initiatives that encourage the participation of disadvantaged groups in sports activities.

Example of sport projects that can be funded:

- [Lab Academy of Rowing, Germany/Sachsen-Czech Republic](#): addresses the sedentary way of life of children and youth by developing a new methodology aimed at improving health aspects of participants with the help of sport.
- The [Cyclewalk Project](#) aims at supporting the shift from car usage to cycling and walking mobility patterns over shorter distances, improving the accessibility for pedestrians and cyclists (with regions from Romania, Italy, Slovenia, the Netherlands, Lithuania, Austria).
- [Sustainable touristic routes between Italy and France](#). The development of sustainable tourism, integrated with soft mobility and intermodality, represents a prospect of socio-economic growth for the entire cross-border area. The general objective was to increase the number of tourists in the cross-border area all year long, through a joint management plan of sustainable tourist routes.

3.4 Cohesion Fund⁷

The [Cohesion Fund](#) supports investments in the field of environment and trans-European networks in the area of transport infrastructure (TEN-T). For the 2021-2027 period, the Cohesion Fund concerns Bulgaria, Czechia, Estonia, Greece, Croatia, Cyprus, Latvia, Lithuania, Hungary, Malta, Poland, Portugal, Romania, Slovakia and Slovenia.

Example of sport projects that can be funded:

[Development of green areas for physical activity in Łódź, Poland](#). The project is aimed at developing green areas in a health center of Łódź, in order to provide patients and the surrounding community with an area to practice physical activity. Through this project, the local community will be able to use a green area that was not accessible to the public and at the same time provide a unique opportunity to patients and people with disability to take part in physical activities.

3.5 Agricultural Development Fund (EAFRD)⁸

Among other priorities, this fund supports the promotion of social inclusion, poverty reduction and economic development in rural areas.

⁶ <https://www.interregeurope.eu/what-is-interreg-europe>

⁷ https://ec.europa.eu/regional_policy/funding/cohesion-fund_en

⁸ https://commission.europa.eu/funding-tenders/find-funding/eu-funding-programmes/european-agricultural-fund-rural-development-eafrd_en

Example of projects that can be funded:

[Converting an old railway line into a leisure path to diversify rural economy](#). Three French municipalities used EAFRD support to transform a former railway line into a leisure path for walking, cycling and horse riding (France). The leisure path provides an opportunity to rediscover specific local landscapes, particularly wetlands. The path represents a tourism and leisure asset for the local community. Innovative techniques are used to maintain the path.

3.6 [European Maritime Fund \(EMFF\)](#)

The European Maritime Fund supports the diversification of the economies of the coastal communities and the creation of new jobs and improve quality of life along European coasts.

Examples of sport projects that can be funded:

[North East Meltemi, Greece](#): The objective of the MELTEMI project was to bring together Greek and Turkish Aegean coastlines that were less known or less accessible. To help local economies, the project strived to promote those islands, their communities of artisans, their gastronomical tradition, unique cultures and beaches created for sailing, surfing and kiteboarding.

More project examples can be found at the [Kohesio website](#)⁹: a comprehensive knowledge database that offers easy and transparent access to up-to-date information on projects and beneficiaries co-funded by EU Cohesion policy.

⁹ <https://kohesio.ec.europa.eu/en/>

4. Steps to develop a successful project for Cohesion Policy Funds

This section outlines the basic steps to follow in order to develop a successful Cohesion Policy Fund proposal.

STEP 1: Do a needs analysis and identify potential objectives

Identify which **projects** do you plan to fund and the aspects of your organisation **that generate economic and social impact**. This will help you to justify the impact of your project and to **identify concrete Key Performance Indicators (KPIs) and achievable objectives in the short, medium and long term**. In this sense, identify if your project idea relates more to regional development (and hence is more linked to the [ERDF](#)) or social issues/skills development (then your project is more likely to be funded under the [ESF+](#)). On the other hand, if you are based in a coastal or rural area, please double check the [EAFRD](#) and the [EMFF](#) and identify which type of funding would be more suitable to finance your project idea.

STEP 2: Identify if you need to create a partnership

In view of the increasingly limited availability of funds, the projects with the best chances of being funded tend to be those with the greatest **impact** and the most sustainable in the **medium and long term**. To this end, the creation of partnerships between different stakeholders is very important. In this way, each member of the partnership brings **knowledge and expertise** to the project and also increases the impact of the project in different areas. With regard to **partners**:

- The very nature of the funds means that they must be **local or regional**. However, some funds such as **Interreg Europe** require partnerships to be formed by **entities from different countries**.
- At this stage if you are planning to involve partners you should clearly **identify which type of partners will you involve, and which will be their role and added value in the project**. At this stage identify who will be the **coordinator**.
- When defining a partnership, it is important to consider the **principle of the quadruple helix**. The quadruple helix refers to a collaborative approach involving **academia, industry, government, and civil society** as key stakeholders in the innovation process. It emphasizes the integration of these four sectors to foster innovation, knowledge exchange, and socio-economic development.
- **Engaging in conversations with various local and national organizations that have a connection to the specific field you are seeking funding for can be highly beneficial**. These organizations may include regional development agencies, city authorities, or business support entities like Chambers of Commerce. Not only can they offer valuable assistance, but they might also present potential partnership opportunities, particularly within the context of smart specialization strategies.

STEP 3. Check the European Commission's Priorities, Partnerships Agreements, Operational Programmes and Smart Specialisation Strategies (S3)

Once you have a draft project idea based on your needs analysis and the discussions with potential partners, if any, check the [European Commission's priorities](#), [Partnership agreements](#) and the [Operational Programmes](#) that apply in your region as well as the [Smart Specialization Strategy](#) if any. They will tell you the strategic priorities at EU level, what the authorities are trying to achieve in your country/region; which of the EU priorities figure most prominently for your country/region and the funding is planned to be implemented.

- [European Commission's policy objectives](#) will give you an idea of the ultimate goals that are intended to be achieved when financing projects.
- [Partnership agreements](#) are agreements between the European Commission and individual EU Countries. They set out the national authorities' plans on how to use EU funds in shared management in 2021-2027. The different partnership agreements can be found [here](#).
- [Operational Programmes \(OP\)](#) break down the overarching strategic objectives agreed in the **Partnership Agreement** into investment priorities, specific objectives and further into concrete actions. Which OPs are relevant depends on which country you are located in and whether you operate at national or regional level. The different operational programmes can be found [here](#). **Please note that different funds have different OPs.** In addition, since **not all the OPs explicitly mention sport, identify what are the other policy priorities beyond sport that would be linked to your project.** (I.e.: Tourism, energy efficiency, social inclusion, etc.).
- [Smart Specialisation Strategies](#): Approach that focuses on specific geographical areas and involves the identification of strategic sectors for intervention based on analyzing the strengths and potential of the local economy, as well as engaging in an Entrepreneurial Discovery Process (EDP) that involves a wide range of stakeholders. They also emphasize the importance of implementing effective monitoring mechanisms.

STEP 4: Identify if you are eligible for funding and the deadlines that apply in your region

Once you have revised the [Operational Programme](#) that applies in your region for the specific programme that you are interested in, **verify if you are eligible to apply for funding.** I.e.: Some Operational Programmes offer grants to **SMEs and businesses**. Likewise, **sport clubs, voluntary organisations as well as higher education institutions** can often apply for grants.

Another option is the creation of **clusters** or larger-scale projects based on the **quadruple helix principle** (I.e.: Projects involving academia, government, industry and civil society). If you are considering this option, define your role. Would you be the project leader or a partner? This will have implications on the subsequent steps.

Identify the deadlines that apply for submitting applications and create a backward planning schedule to allow sufficient time for the preparation of your proposal.

STEP 5: Identify if you have the resources and commitment to develop and manage the project if selected (both from an economic and human resources point of view)

The **application process** for these types of funds can be complex, especially if it is done for the first time. It can also be time-consuming in terms of **preparation and coordination**, whether the project is submitted as part of a partnership or not. Therefore, the preparation of a proposal will require dedication from team members, and this should be taken into account when planning the **allocation of human resources** to the project. Moreover, the **management and justification of funds** sometimes requires specific knowledge from an administrative and accounting point of view which should also be taken into account at the time of designing and planning your project.

- In this sense, identify if your organisation would be able to develop and deliver a proposal on time within the **deadlines** and subsequently manage and justify the project or if external assistance would be needed.
- In case your organisation lacks the human or financial resources to lead such a project, consider working with larger organisations and get involved in a lighter capacity.

On the other hand, these funds have **co-financing rates** that need to be partially covered by the applicants themselves. In this regard, it is important to assess whether the necessary financial resources are available to cover the required co-financing rate. Please note that the co-financing rates vary from fund to fund and from country to country.

STEP 6: Identify if your project can be linked to other policy priorities – find the right “entry point”

Since not all the [OPs](#) explicitly mention sport, once you have defined the type of project you would like to propose and the partners of your project, identify what are the **other policy priorities beyond sport that could be linked to your project**. (i.e.: Tourism, energy efficiency, social inclusion, research and innovation, etc.). This will be key to identify the so-called “**Entry points**” if OPs do not envisage funding for projects directly linked to sport. For example, if OPs do not envisage funding projects linked to sport, but if they have among their priorities social inclusion or competence development, the project proposed for funding as part of the European Social Fund could refer to the use of sport for the inclusion of migrants or for the development of soft skills through sport. On the other hand, if they mention energy efficiency or infrastructure renovation, regional development funds can be used for the renovation and modernisation of sports infrastructure with the aim of making it more sustainable and energy efficient.

STEP 7: Define the type of project you would like to fund

Define and develop your project idea based on your needs analysis, the priorities identified in the Partnership agreements, Operational Programmes and Smart Specialization Strategies (S3) as well as the outcome of the discussion with your project partners if any. Which OPs are relevant will depend on which country you are located in and whether you operate at national or regional level as well as the type of funding that you are applying for.

- [Check the Kohesio website](#) to get inspired and identify projects similar to your idea that have already been funded. This will give you an idea of the type of eligible projects, the amounts they have received and hence the co-funding rates they had and how they have approached the description of their ideas based on the priorities identified in the Operational Programmes.

When you describe your project idea:

- **Highlight how sport can be a useful instrument for delivering economic and social development.** I.e.:

1. Sport generates **business activity**, both directly and indirectly, from sports clubs and gyms to SMEs and as a result of the organisation of sport events;
2. that sport is a high **employment multiplier**. It requires human input and generates employment directly linked to the practice of sport but also indirectly linked, for example, to the maintenance of infrastructures.
3. sport is closely linked to **tourism** thanks to sporting events, which in turn become branding tools for cities and territories.
4. Sport is closely linked to **innovation**. For example, through applications for measuring performance and monitoring activity or the development of new materials.
5. Sport contributes to **social inclusion** and **employability**. For example, sport can help to engage with excluded social groups and to develop transferable skills such as teamwork, resilience, and empathy. Etc.

- **Define clear objectives and concrete KPIs:** Establish concrete objectives and KPIs for the **short, medium, and long term**. Define how the objectives will be achieved, who will be involved in each stage of the project and the role of each of the partners in the case of partnerships, how the project will be managed over time and how it will be monitored. Be as concrete as possible and structure the information in an easily and visual way so that the evaluators can identify the potential of your project.
- **Structure your project idea in a comprehensive way.**
 - **Use a problem-solution approach.**
 - **Use SMART objectives: Specific, Measurable, Achievable, Relevant, and Time-bound.**
 - **Define a Work Plan:** Outline the key activities that will be undertaken to achieve project objectives. Including timelines, milestones, and dependencies.
 - **Identify the expected outcomes and impact.**
 - **Define the budget and the necessary human resources.**
 - **Describe the monitoring and evaluation methods.**

STEP 8: Identify and contact the responsible Managing Authority

Managing authorities (MAs) are designated at national and regional level and manage the Operational Programmes at national level. Each country may have different managing authorities that cover different regions. To identify the Managing Authority who is competent in your region check the list of managing authorities for the 2021-2027 period [here](#)¹⁰.

¹⁰ https://ec.europa.eu/regional_policy/in-your-country/managing-authorities_en

- **Please bear in mind that the different programmes may be managed by different managing authorities. The relevant Operational Programme document will tell you how each programme is being managed.**
- The MAs will tell you whether there are any open calls for proposals depending on the programming cycle (The current programming period is 2021-2027). This is important to establish when it is possible to make proposals and to plan the projects accordingly. They may provide advice at the early stages in the development of a proposal and help you to identify the Cohesion Policy Funds available to finance your project. However, **please note that restrictions apply in this regard once a call for proposals has been published.**

In addition, find the right contacts and resources to inform yourself on Cohesion funding (managing authorities, regional services and national contact points for example) A designated Managing Authority provides information on the programme, selects projects and monitors implementation. Select a country to find out which organisations are responsible.

STEP 9: Plan how to develop and submit your proposal

Before the call is published:

Once you have developed your project idea and verified its viability, you can start the **process of preparing your proposal**.

- It is worth noting that deadlines may vary, hence it is recommended to **initiate the proposal preparation prior to the official call announcement**. Following that, **establish a team** within your organization that will be accountable for drafting the proposal.
- **In the case of a partnership**, ensure that the **distribution of tasks and team roles** are clearly defined, particularly identifying the individual responsible for writing the proposal or its sections, as well as designating a coordinator if multiple partners are involved.

Whenever feasible, refer to previous calls and proposals available at [Kohesio](#) and seek guidance and support from experienced individuals or institutions such as universities, chambers of commerce, and research centers during the preparation and submission process.

Once the call is published:

- **Carefully read through the call**, paying close attention to its content. **Identify the specific criteria and objectives outlined in the call and ensure that your project idea aligns with them.** It is crucial to match your project objectives with the requirements and goals set forth in the call.
- **Define and action plan** and provide an overview of the main tasks that will be carried out to accomplish project goals. Present a thorough schedule of work, including specific **deadlines, important milestones and deliverables, and interdependencies.**
- **Make sure that all the necessary administrative and legal documents are prepared on time**, especially if the legal representatives of the organisation need to sign them.

STEP 10: Implement and assess the project

When implementing the project:

- Unforeseen events and changes may arise and will need to be justified. In such cases, it is important to remain flexible while keeping the project's objectives in mind as outlined in the work plan and considering the established roadmap and milestones during the planning phase.
- When making **payments** related to the project, ensure that they are **eligible costs**.
- Keep records of all invoices, receipts, contracts, and relevant documentation related to project expenses and organise them. This will be appreciated during the justification process and in the event of a future audit.
- **Assign team roles clearly and designate a coordinator.**
- Implement appropriate **financial controls** to ensure the proper use and management of public funds.
- Make sure the **project's funding source is visible in project communications**.
- Identify the sustainability of the project, both economically and environmentally.

When assessing the project:

- **Start preparing the justification reports well in advance**, especially if there have been any changes in the project.
- **Ensure that all the expenses claimed fall under the category of eligible costs.**
- **Provide evidence of the project's impact**, such as measurable results, data analysis, and documented success stories.
- **Adhere to deadlines and provide accurate information in all reporting.**

5. The main sources of EU Funding for the sport sector outside Cohesion Policy Funds

5.1 Erasmus+ Sport Programme¹¹

This is a funding programme aimed at promoting sports at the grassroots level, developing innovative sports projects, and supporting the mobility of athletes and coaches across EU countries. It provides funding for a wide range of sports-related activities, such as training courses, exchange programs, and collaborative partnerships. The programme is managed by [EACEA](#).

Examples of sport projects funded:

[Parenting to promote and protect the health of young athletes \(Belgium, Denmark, Netherlands, Norway, United Kingdom\)](#): The project was developed with the aim of minimising the physical and psychological risks that young athletes encounter by improving the support that is provided to, and

¹¹ <https://erasmus-plus.ec.europa.eu/fr/opportunities/opportunities-for-organisations/sport-actions>

available for, the parents of all children involved in sport. This project drew on the expertise of academics and practitioners working across Europe in the field of youth sport. Specifically, this project brought together researchers and practitioners from 11 organisations to share expertise and experiences.

5.2 [Horizon Europe](#)¹² (former Horizon 2020)

Horizon Europe, the European Union's flagship research and innovation program, encompasses funding opportunities for research specifically focused on sports science and technology. The programme is managed by [REA \(European research executive agency\)](#) and [CINEA \(European Climate, Infrastructure and Environment Executive Agency\)](#).

Example of sport projects funded:

[Sport Infinity, Waste-Based Rapid Adhesive-free Production of Sports goods \(Germany\)](#): The project aimed to identify and develop innovative partly waste-based long-fibre reinforced composites enabling the automatic production of easily customisable plastic sports goods. The project focused on the production of balls and shoes and adopted a design-driven approach exploiting the automation potential of rotation moulding processes, which offered significant design freedom.

5.3 [LIFE programme](#)¹³

The LIFE Programme is the EU's funding instrument for the environment and climate action. The programme is managed by [CINEA \(European Climate, Infrastructure and Environment Executive Agency\)](#).

Example of sport projects funded:

[RE-SHOES project](#): **Sorting and recovery worn-out shoes and production scraps to make secondary raw materials for manufacture new REcycled SHOES.** RE-SHOES wants to provide an alternative, circular and sustainable solution for footwear end-of-life management. The project aims to implement a new circular economy business model based on the collection, sorting and recycling of post-consumer outdoor shoes from which to obtain secondary raw materials to be used for manufacture a new generation of high-quality recycled shoes.

To discover more funding opportunities available for the sport sector please check the SHARE paper [“EU Multiannual financial framework 2021-2027 How can the sport sector benefit? -background paper](#)¹⁴”.

¹² https://research-and-innovation.ec.europa.eu/funding/funding-opportunities/funding-programmes-and-open-calls/horizon-europe_en

¹³ https://cinea.ec.europa.eu/programmes/life_en

¹⁴ <https://sport.ec.europa.eu/sites/default/files/2022-08/SHARE-LAB-EU-MFF-2021-2027-guidance-for-sport.pdf>

6. Good practices and available databases.

6.1 [SHARE project database](#)¹⁵

The database compiles sports-related projects funded by cohesion funds during the 2014-2020 period. The database, [accessible through this link](#), provides the following information for each project: the region and country of implementation, the lead partner involved, the project budget, its main outcomes, the EU policy priorities it is linked to, and, whenever available, a link to the project's website.

6.2 [Kohesio website](#)¹⁶

Kohesio is an extensive knowledge database that provides convenient and transparent access to current information about projects and recipients co-funded by the EU Cohesion policy during the 2014-2020 programming period. Within the database, you can discover details regarding the European Regional Development Fund (ERDF), the Cohesion Fund (CF), and the European Social Fund (ESF). Currently, the database encompasses over 1.5 million projects and approximately 500,000 beneficiaries. In collaboration with EU Member States and program authorities, the database will gradually incorporate updates for new projects and beneficiaries pertaining to the 2021-2027 programming period.

6.3 [Erasmus + project results](#)¹⁷

The website collects information about selected projects as well as the outcomes of completed projects.

6.4 [Cordis](#)

The [Community Research and Development Information Service \(CORDIS\)](#) is the European Commission's primary source of results from the projects funded by the EU's framework programmes for research and innovation, from FP1 to Horizon Europe.

6.5 [Innovation radar](#)

The Innovation Radar is a European Commission initiative to identify high potential innovations and innovators in EU-funded research and innovation projects. Read the [Innovation Radar FAQ's](#) for more explanations.

7. Other useful guides, links and documents.

7.1 SHARE papers and publications

- [SHARE vision on the contribution of sport to regional development](#)
- [SHARE - Contribution of sport to regional development through Cohesion Policy 2021-2027](#). The European Union institutions are focusing on making Europe more adaptable to societal and economic

¹⁵https://cloud-utilities.storage.googleapis.com/fusion-tables/index.html?1f-FvO_vnyD6X78gtdSRn4v-U3WwjnePJ9FXdY4gLQ3Q

¹⁶ <https://kohesio.ec.europa.eu/en/>

¹⁷ <https://erasmus-plus.ec.europa.eu/es/projects/search/?page=1&sort=&domain=eplus2021&view=list&map=false&searchType=projects>

challenges of the 21st century. The Cohesion Policy's proposed regulatory framework focuses on 5 main objectives. The aim of this paper is to outline and explore how sport projects could help the EU in delivering on these main objectives.

- [SHARE - EU multiannual financial framework 2021-2027](#). This paper offers practical information on the various EU funding mechanisms available through the MFF 2021-2027 that are of relevance for the sport sector.
- [SHARE - Next Generation EU](#). Next Generation EU offers several possibilities for the sport sector to benefit from its various recovery mechanisms, not only as a hard-hit sector in need of reconstruction, but also as a strategic sector with a meaningful impact in Europe's wider economic, resilience and social recovery process.
- [SHARE Active Development paper: An integrated contribution from sport and physical activity to economic and social development](#).
- [SHARE - Green transition and sport at all levels](#). The main aim of this initiative is to provide some orientation for sport organisations on how to contribute effectively to hastening the transition to a more sustainable economy and society.
- [SHARE - The New European Bauhaus: opportunities for the sport sector](#). The NEB is a creative and interdisciplinary movement that connects the European Green Deal to everyday life. The NEB welcomes contributions from a wide plethora of stakeholders and domains, including the sport movement.

7.2 DG EAC's Sport Unit website¹⁸

Gathers funding opportunities for the sports sector at European level with a focus on: 1) [Erasmus + Sport programme](#) (Key Action 1 and 2) and [Pilot Projects and Preparatory Actions](#) (PPAs), new initiatives that might turn into EU funding programmes. Pilot projects are designed to test the feasibility of an action, and last not more than 2 years. Preparatory actions last for up to 3 years, and are often the successor of a successful pilot project.

On the other hand, all the SHARE papers can be found in this website.

7.3 European Education and Culture Executive Agency's website (EACEA)¹⁹

The European Education and Culture Executive Agency (EACEA) manages funding for education, culture, audiovisual, sport, citizenship and volunteering. You can find information on [ongoing projects](#) and check the available funding opportunities related to [Erasmus +](#); [Creative Europe](#); [Citizens, Equality, rights and values \(CERV\)](#); [European solidarity Corps](#) as well as the [Pilot Projects and Preparatory Actions](#).

7.4 Bodies responsible for Structural Funds programmes²⁰

A list of Managing Authorities and intermediate bodies of Investment for jobs and growth programmes 2021-2027. Please note that some Managing Authorities organise info sessions.

7.5 Interreg Europe's points of contact

You can locate the contact information for the program's main contact person in each country, along with the most recent profiles, concepts, and events in the region. This is also where you can access details

¹⁸ <https://sport.ec.europa.eu/funding>

¹⁹ https://www.eacea.ec.europa.eu/index_en

²⁰ <https://www.interregeurope.eu/in-my-country>

about the administrative structure in each country: the individuals accountable for Structural Funds programs, the specific first level control system in place, and any other country-specific information.

7.6 Fi - Compass²¹

fi-compass is a platform for advisory services on financial instruments under EU shared management. It is provided by the European Commission in partnership with the European Investment Bank.

fi-compass is designed to support EU shared management Managing Authorities and other interested parties, by providing practical know-how and learning tools on financial instruments. These include 'how-to' manuals, factsheets and case study publications, as well as face-to-face training seminars, networking events, and video information.

7.7 Enterprise Europe Network²²

The Enterprise Europe Network (EEN) helps businesses innovate and grow on an international scale. It is the world's largest support network for small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs) with international ambitions.

The Network offers guidance on the various types of EU funding and other financial resources that are likely to be applicable to business requirements. They offer assistance in navigating EU funding and financial tools, making it easier to access EU funding and public financial resources. This includes but is not limited to: 1) Collaborating with National Contact Points (NCPs) to provide guidance on Horizon Europe funding opportunities. 2) Partnering with Managing Authorities/Intermediate Bodies to provide information on ERDF (European Regional Development Fund) programs and 3) Facilitating access to public financial resources through local, regional, or national authorities, as well as financial intermediaries such as banks and venture capital organizations that offer funding through financial instruments.

7.8 Funding for sports in the European Union 2021-2027 – European Olympic Committees EU Office²³

Brochure on EU funding programmes available for the sports sector. **The complete version of the guide is only available upon request.**

²¹ <https://www.fi-compass.eu/>

²² <https://een.ec.europa.eu/about-enterprise-europe-network>

²³ https://www.euoffice.euolympic.org/wp-content/uploads/2023/01/funding_brochure.pdf